Reply to Office Action of June 8, 2007

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

I. **Status of the Claims**

Claims 2 - 8, 10 - 29, and 31 and 32 are currently pending. With this Response, claim 10 is

canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 16, 17, 21, 23 and 29 are amended. No new

matter is introduced. Support for the amendments may be found, for example, at page 12, lines 2 -

25 of Applicants' specification.

II. **Objection to Drawings**

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner finds

that the flap parts and related sensor as claimed in claims 13 and 16 are not illustrated by the

drawings. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 13 claims a device for sorting laundry pieces as claimed in claims 29, 11 and 12,

which includes a funnel for transferring laundry pieces that has a flap floor comprising a plurality of

flap parts that open and close to transfer the laundry pieces to a transport device. Claim 16 claims

the device of claim 13, further comprising a sensor at each flap part for recognizing a predetermined

volume of laundry pieces on the flap parts.

As described for example at page 24, lines 6 - 16 of Applicants' specification, each of

funnels 24, 26 as illustrated in FIG. 1 has a flap floor 32 comprising two flap parts 28, 30 that open

downwardly to dispense pieces of laundry in the funnels 24, 26. Sensors 34, 36 are respectively

located adjacent to the flap parts 28, 30 which are of the light barrier type and thereby recognize laundry pieces resting on flap floors 32.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that FIG. 1 illustrates flap parts 28, 30 and related sensors 34, 36 as claimed in claims 13 and 16, and respectfully request that the objection to the drawing be

withdrawn.

III. Acknowledgment of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner indicating that claims 10, 13, 16, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 32 are objected to as each being dependent on a rejected base claim, and that each would be allowable if

rewritten in independent form including all limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims.

As noted below, Applicants cancel claim 10 without prejudice or disclaimer, amend

independent claims 17, 23 and 29 to essentially include the elements of allowable claim 10, and

respectfully submit that each of amended independent claims 17, 23 and 29 are allowable.

Applicants submit that the objection to canceled claim 10 is now moot. As claims 13, 16, 21, 22, 27,

28 and 32 each depend from one of allowable independent claims 17, 23 and 29, Applicants

respectfully submit that claims 13, 16, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 32 are allowable and request that the

objection to the claims be withdrawn.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103

Claims 2, 3, 4, 11, 17, 18, 23 - 26, 29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being

anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0032805 to Lawandy et al. ("Lawandy"). Claims 5

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- 8, 12, 15, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawandy in

view of U.S. Patent No. 1,597,527 to Lane ("Lane"), U.S. Patent No. 5,700,293 to Rydell

("Rydell") and U.S. Patent No. 4,239,435 to Weiss et al. ("Weiss"). Applicants respectfully traverse

these rejections.

In the interests of prosecution efficiency, Applicants cancel claim 10 without prejudice or

disclaimer, and amend independent claims 17, 23 and 29 to essentially include the elements of

allowable claim 10. As noted above, claim 10 was identified by the Examiner as containing

allowable subject matter.

As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that each of amended independent claims 17, 23

and 29 includes allowable subject matter as identified by the Examiner, and that each of claims 17,

23 and 29 therefore stands in condition for allowance for at least this reason. As each of claims 2 -

7, 11, 12, 15, 18 - 20, 24 - 26, and 31 depends from one of allowable independent claims 17, 23, and

29, Applicants submit that dependent claims 2 - 7, 11, 12, 15, 18 - 20, 24 - 26, and 31 are also

allowable for at least this reason.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 2 - 7, 11, 12, 15, 17 -

20, 23 - 26, 29 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e), 103(a) therefore be withdrawn.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to

be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to

pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number

indicated below once he has reviewed the proposed amendment if the Examiner believes any issue

can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

Dated: October 11, 2007

Respectfully submitted

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